



## **glifaa – LGBT+ Pride in Foreign Affairs Agencies** **Priorities for the New Administration**

For nearly 30 years, glifaa-LGBT+ Pride in Foreign Affairs Agencies has advanced equality of LGBT+ employees in the State Department, USAID, and other U.S. government agencies represented abroad. Among our achievements, glifaa has worked with Department leadership to address discrimination in security clearance denials, achieve benefits for same-sex partners, and ensure LGBT+ equality remains a central point of U.S. policy. Today, with our 1000-person strong membership, much work remains. glifaa looks forward to working with the new administration to ensure equal treatment for LGBT+ employees and family members. Our immediate priorities include the following:

### **1. Appoint LGBT+ Persons as Ambassadors and to Senior Positions, especially Lesbian, Bi, Trans, and People of Color**

At least 10 openly gay individuals have served as Ambassador, however, a president has never appointed an out member of the lesbian, bi, or trans communities, nor a LGBT+ person of color, as ambassador. Additionally, several high-level, LGBT-focused positions have remained vacant for years.

#### **glifaa urges the new administration to:**

- a. Pull from a diverse group of members of the LGBT+ community, particularly from within the foreign and civil service, to serve in ambassadorial and other senior leadership roles.
- b. Appoint a Special Envoy for Human Rights of LGBT+ issues at State with rank of Ambassador.
- c. Appoint a Global LGBT+ Coordinator at USAID to ensure USAID programming takes into account and targets vulnerable LGBT+ populations in programming.
- d. Encourage foreign affairs agencies to strengthen efforts to recruit, hire, retain, and promote LGBT+ persons and persons of color.

### **2. Renounce the Report from the Commission on Unalienable Rights and Highlight that the U.S. Commitment to Universal Human Rights includes LGBT+ Rights**

The work of the Commission on Unalienable Rights undermines equality for LGBT+ individuals worldwide by allowing foreign governments to define human rights according to their own traditions and by elevating religious freedom and property rights. This gives governments a green light to continue persecution against the LGBT+ community and puts the safety and security of LGBT+ U.S. diplomats who serve in these countries at risk.

## **glifaa urges the new administration to:**

- a. Formally disavow the work of the Commission on Unalienable Rights and issue an Executive Order reaffirming America's global commitment to LGBT+ rights.
- b. Promote LGBT+ human rights worldwide and integrate LGBT+ rights within the broader human rights agenda.
- c. Reestablish and invigorate foreign assistance programs that support LGBT+ communities.
- d. Reduce the backlog of LGBT+ refugees awaiting resettlement in the United States and ensure asylum and refugee programs are directed to take into account the specific vulnerabilities of LGBT+ communities abroad.

### **3. Review of Policies Affecting Trans Employees:**

Despite this year's *Bostock vs. Clayton County* decision, the Department has yet to issue formal guidance clarifying policies and procedures for trans employees and family members abroad.

## **glifaa urges the new administration to ensure:**

- a. The Department of State conducts a comprehensive internal review of policies affecting transgender and nonbinary employees, family members, and potential recruits. The review would focus on ways to ensure that transgender and nonbinary employees and family members can easily access appropriate medical, employment, and educational resources without negative repercussions in assignments as well as recruitment and retention.
- b. All Department forms and materials use inclusive gender language and options.
- c. All employees and family members have access to restrooms and facilities according to their gender.
- d. All employees and family members can easily secure diplomatic passports and visas aligning with their gender.

### **4. Demand Reciprocal LGBT+ Accreditation**

After the repeal of DOMA in 2015, the Department made progress in increasing the number of locations overseas that would grant diplomatic privileges and immunities to same-sex spouses of U.S. embassy personnel. However, in recent years, efforts have stagnated; approximately 70 countries still do not accredit same-sex spouses and family members, and some countries do not allow people living with HIV/AIDS to serve at all. As a result, LGBT+ employees face unequal career development potential.

## **glifaa urges the new administration to:**

- a. Increase the number of locations overseas that grant diplomatic privileges and immunities to LGBT+ personnel including personnel with HIV/AIDS. The Administration should demand diplomatic reciprocity by asking foreign governments to afford married same-sex couples and their family members the same privileges and immunities that the U.S. grants their married, same and opposite sex couples and family members. Furthermore, the Administration should urge countries to abolish policies that prevent diplomats with HIV/AIDS from serving.
- b. Establish a working group comprised of representatives from the offices of the Undersecretaries of Management (M) and Political Affairs (P); the Bureau of Global Talent Management (GTM), the regional bureaus (AF, NEA, SCA, EAP, WHA, IO and EUR); the Office of Foreign Missions (OFM) and glifaa to develop, implement, and monitor an action plan to expand the number of countries that accredit same-sex married couples.
- c. For LGBT+ families serving in countries where diplomatic privileges and immunities are limited or non-existent, the Department should pre-approve involuntary separate maintenance allowance, provide for up to 20 days of pre-approved administrative leave per calendar year to visit family members not living at Post, and increased flexibility in shortening the length of overseas tours in countries where LGBT+ families are not accorded privileges and immunities.

